

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 1-21, 25, 27-32 are pending. Claims 1, 20, 25, are amended, claims 22-24 and 26 are canceled, and claims 27-32 are added.

Applicant appreciates the allowance of claim 20 if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 20 has been amended to include all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. Therefore, claim 20 is allowable. Claim 21, which depends from claim 20, is allowable as depending from an allowable claim and also for the specific limitations recited therein.

Claims 1-6, 8, 9, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takahashi. Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. as being unpatentable over Takahashi in view of Wierzchon. Claim 1 is amended to recite that the member does not contact the end wall of the shank before the initiator is actuated. Takahashi does not disclose or suggest a member that does not contact the end wall of the shank before the initiator is actuated. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-6, 8-11, and 31, which depend from claim 1, are allowable as depending from an allowable claim and also for the specific limitations recited therein.

Claim 7, which depends from claim 1, should be allowable for the same reasons as claim 1 and also for the additional feature that the body of the fastener comprises a metal housing and a plastic portion molded onto the housing. The metal housing forms a portion of the head and the plastic portion forms the shank and a portion of the head. Neither Takahahsi nor any of the other prior art disclose or suggest this feature. Also, the Office Action cites no reference disclosing that the body of the fastener comprises a metal housing and a plastic portion molded onto the housing, where the metal housing forms a portion of the head, and the plastic portion forms the shank and a portion of the head. Applicant, at this time and pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.104(d)(2), requests an affidavit of the Examiner to support the Examiner's statement.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 7 is improper and allowance of claim 7 is respectfully requested. Claims 12-19 are allowable and should no longer be withdrawn since they depend from an allowable generic or linking claim 1.

Claim 25 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Elqadah et al. Claim 25 is amended to recite the following. The actuatable fastener comprises a body including a head and a shank. The body includes an interior chamber partially defined by a side wall extending from the head into the shank and an end wall positioned in the shank. The actuatable fastener further comprises a member disposed in the chamber and an initiator actuatable to produce combustion

products in the chamber that act on the member to move the member in a first direction in the chamber to strike the end wall. The member strikes the end wall creating a fracture in the shank separating the first portion of the shank from the second portion of the shank and releases the vent member for movement toward the open position. The combustion products move the member beyond the fracture at least a predetermined distance to move the first portion of the shank at least the predetermined distance from the second portion to propel the vent member from the closed position to the open position.

Neither Elqadah nor any of the other prior art discloses or suggests all of the features in claim 25 as amended. Therefore, claim 25 is allowable.

New claim 27 recites an actuatable fastener comprising a body including a head and a shank. The body includes an interior chamber partially defined by a side wall extending from the head into the shank and an end wall positioned in the shank. The actuatable fastener also comprises a member disposed in the chamber and an initiator actuatable to produce combustion products in the chamber that act on the member to move the member in a first direction in the chamber to strike the end wall. The member strikes the end wall and creates a fracture in the shank separating at least a portion of the shank from a remainder of the shank. The combustion products move the member beyond the fracture at least a predetermined distance to move the at least a portion of the shank at least the predetermined distance from the remainder of the shank. The head and shank are formed of one piece but not two pieces

attached together and the interior chamber entirely surrounds the member. None of the prior art discloses or suggests all of the features recited in claim 27. Therefore, claim 27 is allowable.

New claim 28 recites an apparatus comprising an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for helping to protect a vehicle occupant. The inflatable vehicle occupant protection device has a deflated condition and an inflated condition. The apparatus also comprises an inflation fluid source actuatable to provide inflation fluid to inflate the protection device from the deflated condition to the inflated condition, and a housing for helping to direct inflation fluid from the inflation fluid source toward the protection device upon actuation of the inflation fluid source.

The apparatus further comprises an actuatable fastener connected to the housing. The actuatable fastener comprises a body including a head and a shank. The body includes an interior chamber partially defined by a side wall extending from the head into the shank and an end wall positioned in the shank. The actuatable fastener further comprises a member disposed in said chamber, and an initiator actuatable to produce combustion products in the chamber that act on the member to move the member in a first direction in the chamber to strike the end wall. The member strikes the end wall creating a fracture in the shank separating at least a portion of the shank from a remainder of the shank. The combustion products move the member beyond the fracture at least a predetermined distance to move the at least a portion of the

shank at least the predetermined distance from the remainder of the shank. None of the prior art discloses or suggests all of the features recited in claim 28. Therefore, claim 28 is allowable.

New claim 29 recites an apparatus comprising an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for helping to protect a vehicle occupant. The inflatable vehicle occupant protection device has a deflated condition and an inflated condition. The apparatus also comprises an inflation fluid source actuatable to provide inflation fluid to inflate the protection device from the deflated condition to the inflated condition, and a housing for helping to direct inflation fluid from the inflation fluid source toward the protection device upon actuation of the inflation fluid source.

The apparatus further comprises a tether for restricting deployment of the inflatable occupant protection device. The tether has a first end fixed to the inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for movement with the inflatable vehicle occupant protection device and a second end fixed to the housing. A first actuatable fastener has a shank with a first portion connectable with the tether at a location between the first and second end and a second portion connectable with the housing to restrict movement of the inflatable vehicle occupant protection device with respect to the location. The first actuatable fastener is actuatable to fracture the shank and release the tether for movement with the inflatable vehicle occupant protection device to restrict movement of the inflatable occupant protection device with

respect to the second end. None of the prior art discloses or suggests all of the features recited in claim 29. Therefore, claim 29 is allowable.

New claim 30, which depends from claim 29, should be allowed for the same reasons as claim 29 and also for the additional features recited therein. Claim 30 recites that the apparatus further includes a vent opening in the housing for venting inflation fluid from the housing, a vent member movable a predetermined distance from a closed position blocking venting of inflation fluid through the vent opening to an open position enabling venting of inflation fluid through the vent opening, and a second actuatable fastener having a shank with a first portion connectable with the vent member and a second portion connectable with the housing to hold the vent member in the closed position.

The second actuatable fastener is actuatable to fracture the shank and release the vent member for movement toward the open position. The second actuatable fastener further comprises means for displacing the first portion the predetermined distance from the second portion to propel the vent member the predetermined distance from the closed position to the open position. None of the prior art discloses or suggests these features recited in claim 30 and including all of the limitations in claim 29. Therefore, claim 30 is allowable.

New claim 32 recites an apparatus comprising an inflatable vehicle occupant protection device for helping to protect a vehicle occupant. The inflatable vehicle occupant

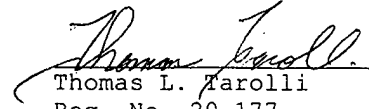
protection device has a deflated condition and an inflated condition. The apparatus also comprises an inflation fluid source actuatable to provide inflation fluid to inflate the protection device from the deflated condition to the inflated condition, and a housing for helping to direct inflation fluid from the inflation fluid source toward the protection device upon actuation of the inflation fluid source.

The apparatus further comprises a vent opening in the housing for venting inflation fluid from the housing, and a vent member having an aperture. The vent member is movable a predetermined distance from a closed position blocking venting of inflation fluid through the vent opening to an open position in which the aperture is in fluid communication with the vent opening to enable venting of inflation fluid through the vent opening. The apparatus also comprises an actuatable fastener having a shank with a first portion connectable with the vent member and a second portion connectable with the housing to hold the vent member in the closed position. The actuatable fastener is actuatable to fracture the shank and release the vent member for movement toward the open position. The actuatable fastener further comprising means for displacing the first portion the predetermined distance from the second portion to propel the vent member the predetermined distance from the closed position to the open position. None of the prior art discloses or suggests all of these features recited in claim 32. Therefore, claim 32 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the amendment be entered and the application allowed.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in
the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account
No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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